



Benton County Emergency Services  
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Benton-Franklin Chapter  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **September is National Preparedness Month**

September is National Preparedness Month, and Benton County Emergency Services (BCES) and the Benton Franklin Chapter of the American Red Cross are teaming up to help local citizens become better prepared for disasters that could strike our area. The six-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and 2005's devastation of our Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina should serve as stark reminders of the need for personal and family preparedness.

"It is essential that families are prepared for disasters that could affect our area, including fires, earthquakes, floods, windstorms, and potential hazardous material spills," said Bob Spencer, manager of Benton County Emergency Management. "Families should have an emergency supply kit and a family emergency plan, along with being informed about the different threats that may affect them."

BCES and/or the Red Cross will be involved in a number of September events to help residents become better prepared, including:

- Kennewick General Hospital's Kid's Health & Swellness Event at Columbia Center Mall on Saturday, September 8;
- Benton City Daze in Benton City on Saturday, September 8;
- "Coffee on Us" in the parking lot of Richland's Uptown Plaza on Friday morning, September 14;
- West Richland's Harvest Festival on Saturday, September 15, and;
- An open house for area residents at the offices of Benton County Emergency Services in Richland on Saturday, September 22.

"We are using these events to reach out to area residents," said Spencer. "However, both BCES and the Red Cross are always available to provide information to individuals, families, businesses, and other organizations on how to be better prepared."

Information on emergency preparedness is available on the Internet at [www.bces.wa.gov](http://www.bces.wa.gov), [www.bfredcross.org](http://www.bfredcross.org), and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Residents can also call BCES at (509) 628-2600 and the American Red Cross at (509) 783-6195 for more information.

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